

FINAL COMMENTS

Rigal

Conclusions; there is a huge disparity between what the panel should be doing, and what they are doing when it comes to appeal without merit warnings (AWMWs); to my mind in maybe a third of the cases where AWMWs were not awarded they were due. And procedural penalties (PPs) are likewise significantly underused.

I'd like to see firmer guidelines in place since we can't seem to rely on anyone's judgment any more. An 'offending' pair appealing an unauthorized information decision against them needs at least 50% of the polled group to support them, or they get an AWMW? Simple and efficient!

Wildavsky

Appeals Committees (ACs) heard 14 cases in Las Vegas and changed the TD's ruling in five of them. I thought the AC improved on the TD's ruling in cases NABC+ NINE and NABC+ 13. I found NABC+ cases EIGHT, ELEVEN, and TWELVE too close to call.

Panels heard 23 cases and changed 8 rulings. In my judgment the panel improved on the TD's ruling in cases 7, 8, and 18 and worsened it in cases 5, 19, 21, and 22. I found case 12 too close to call.

Comparing caseloads for tournaments of different sizes is not especially enlightening, so thanks to several helpful folks in Memphis I've started tracking caseload per table. Since 2001 NABC+ events have generated 19.1 cases per 1000 tables, while other events have generated 1.4 cases per thousand tables. This disparity shouldn't surprise us. Entrants in NABC+ events are the most competitive of the ACBL's players, and there's more at stake in these events.

In Las Vegas there were 14.5 and 1.2 appeals per 1000 tables in NABC+ and other events respectively. Both are below the long-term average, and I'd love to see both drop further.

There are two main ways to decrease the number of appeals. One is better TD rulings, and I think we are seeing those. The other is to assess AWMWs where appropriate. Vegas ACs did a reasonable job at this, failing to assess an AWMW where it was deserved only on case 13. The panels, though, missed opportunities on nine cases: 1, 2, 6, 8, 10, 14, 16, 19, and 20. This will tend to cause more unnecessary appeals in the future. Write-ups sometimes note that the panel decided to educate the appellants instead of assessing an AWMW. To my mind an AWMW is the most effective form of education short of a score penalty. For those who consider the measure too harsh we should remember that it is, after all, only a warning.

My figures, now including table counts and appeals per table, can always be found at my web site:

<http://tameware.com/adam/bridge/laws>

